

Hillandale



Journal of the
City of London
Phonograph and
Gramophone Society

THE HILLANDALE NEWS

APRIL 1983 No 131

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I don't know what that machine is for, Harry,
but I think it must work by suction.

SYMPHONY DISC MACHINES.

"Irresistible."

Cabinet: $13\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ in., Piano Polished Mahogany, Hinged Lid, opening sideways.

Turn Table: 10 in., covered with Red Velvet.

Cone Arm: Gibson Taper Arm, licensed by the Gramophone Co.

Motor: Nickelled, runs ten minutes, and plays approximately five 10 in. Records.

Sound Box: Genuine Exhibition Sound Box.

Flower Horn: Embossed in Solid Brass, $26 \times 21\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Price

£4 10s. Od.



James Dennis

AN APPRECIATION

We very much regret having to report the death at Ipswich of our Vice-President James Dennis on February 27th. He was known the world over for his little magazine *The Record Collector*, a journal that no serious vocal record collector would dream of being without.

Although living well outside London and not able to come to Society meetings, Jim Dennis was always a keen follower of what was going on, and attended our two commemoration dinners and the very occasional Annual General Meeting. He was also on our first official trip to Holland last May. In the early 1950s after a typical Dennis action, he was appointed a Vice-President of the Society.

On the completion of 25 volumes of *The Record Collector* in May 1981, he was honoured by collectors from Europe and America at the B.I.R.S. at an evening presided over by Dame Eva Turner, and many will recall a similar celebration earlier to mark the first ten years of the *Record Collector* at the Berners Hotel in London, attended by collectors, opera singers and music critics, all paying tribute to the largely one-man organisation of this little publication. Starting as a duplicated newsletter, the *Record Collector* became a printed booklet with highly researched articles and discographies, and the 27 volumes will stand as a memorial to this kind, cheerful and knowledgeable man for as long as vocal records are collected and played. Our condolences to his widow Pamela, and his family.

G. L. F.

Members will also be sorry to read of the death on February 19th of Frank Vogel, following a heart attack. Frank was until recently in charge of the Almanac sent out with every issue of *Hillandale*. Another loss has been that of Elspeth Read in South Africa; readers may recall her pithy letter on the subject of so-called 'progress' which appeared in these pages last June.

C. P.

HELP WANTED

A television company planning a series on gramophone history is urgently looking for film footage which illustrates the development of cylinder and disc phonographs. Footage of early recording stars and of gramophones in action is also required.

Any member who can help is asked to write to:

C. Horvath, [REDACTED] London, W.14.

Dear Sir,

After hearing the sad news of the death at 93 of Sir Adrian Boult, I thought it might be a good idea to draw the attention of fellow members to Sir Adrian's unique place in the history of the gramophone.

His first recording (Scarlatti's The Good Humoured Ladies) took place on the 5th of November 1920 for the Gramophone Co. at Hayes. His last was of Parry's 5th Symphony and, just before these final sessions at Abbey Road, he recorded The Planets. This, I think, is the one piece which Sir Adrian has become most famous for. In fact, Holst wrote the following dedication inside Sir Adrian's own copy of the score: "This copy is the property of Adrian Boult who first caused the Planets to shine in public, and thereby earned the gratitude of Gustav Holst." Boult's first recording of The Planets took place at the start of January, 1945.

Just over a year later, towards the end of January 1946, he recorded Job A Masque for Dancing, a piece which Vaughan Williams had written and dedicated to Adrian Boult in the 1930s.

These are just two examples from Sir Adrian's career, which spans the acoustic era of recording to the digital. Perhaps some of his recordings will be released in the new Compact Disc format. At least the recordings of this great man are still with us.

Sadly, he is gone and with him we have lost a vital link with some of the great composers of this century - Vaughan Williams, Holst and Elgar. For me, his recordings occupy a special place in my collection. He was a man whom I greatly wished to meet, but this was not to be.

For anyone interested in the recordings of Sir Adrian Boult, there is an excellent discography by Alan Sanders available through the 'Gramophone' magazine

John E. Cavanagh.

HARRY HEMSLEY

Norman Hemsley, son of the well-known child impersonator Harry Hemsley, is looking for some of his late father's recordings, and would be pleased to hear from members who have any of these for disposal. Hemsley recorded on Columbia, Regal-Zonophone, Edison Bell and probably several more obscure makes. All who can help are asked to write direct to [REDACTED] Richmond, Surrey TW10 5ND.

Decca Records 1929-1980

A reprieve had been granted but it was by no means easy sailing, for another loss, this time of £67,000, had to be faced for the year ended March, 1934, and we still owed a substantial sum to the bank. We were, however, consolidating our position in the industry, and our American contracts were showing the promise of great things in the future. We were achieving bigger sales than our American friends. Whereas in the USA, a sale of 25,000 copies of any one record was regarded as exceptional, in Britain Bing Crosby's record of "Please" went over 60,000 and of "The Last Roundup" 80,000 copies. Our next financial year started on April 1st., and we surely confounded the critics and the host of armchair undertakers.

Only a few months after its first near bankruptcy, Decca again set off on a seemingly dangerous adventure, this time in the USA.

Early in April, we were approached by our American friends as to whether we would be interested in purchasing jointly with them the share capital of American Columbia for the astonishingly low price of \$75,000. Whilst Columbia sales had dwindled to small dimensions, the company possessed a freehold factory at Bridgeport, Connecticut. Our reply was favourable and immediate, even though we would have to scratch around to find our half of the purchase consideration, only some £7,500, a big sum for Decca in those days. On the evening of 29th June, '34, I received a phone call from Milton Diamond (an American attorney) to the effect that a new situation had arisen in connection with the Columbia deal. I told him that I would leave for New York immediately provided we were given an assurance that there would be no change in the status quo ante whilst I was on the Atlantic.

This was granted. However, by the time Lewis had arrived in New York, The American Record Co had bought out Columbia. Undaunted....

...We decided there and then to form a new record company. Jack Kapp (recording manager at Brunswick) was certain that he could bring over Bing Crosby and there was, I believe, a clause in his contract under which if Kapp ceased to be associated with the Brunswick Co., the contract would become null and void. Kapp explained that there was the possibility of making a deal with Warners to take over their record plant on West 54th Street, with about 35 presses, ancillary equipment and recording studios, and the offices at 799 Seventh Ave. Only a small production was being carried out at the plant on transcriptions for radio stations on 16 inch discs.

The question then arose as to the price or prices at which the new Decca records would be marketed. Jack Kapp wanted to follow the existing pattern with 75, 35 and 25 cent records and argued vehemently for this set-up. I could see no hope of success for such a policy. The total sales of records in America were no greater than 10 million and for us to succeed we had not only to capture some of the sales but also to increase the total volume. I insisted that only on the basis of a one price 35 cent record could we agree to go ahead.... Those were the days of the small gross profit on a 35 cent record, and whilst it was unlikely that Victor, Columbia or Brunswick would cut their first line records to 35 cents, even if they did we would be fighting them on equal terms, with top line artists. The possibility of our being undercut was out of the question,

for the 25 cent record was only a commercial proposition through chain stores, with non-royalty artists.

Agreement was eventually reached on the 35 cent selling price.

Negotiations took place with... the head of the Brunswick Radio Corp., Warner's subsidiary. Within a few days we had entered into an agreement under which the plant and recording equipment was purchased, and leases were entered into for both the factory and the offices at 619 West 54th Street, and the offices and recording studios at 799 Seventh Ave. The plant at that time would not have fetched more than \$20,000 or so, in a sale, yet for our purposes it had a special value in that it made it possible for the business to start operations immediately.

Lewis became Chairman of US Decca, and Kapp, the President. The business was formally incorporated on 4th Aug. 1934. All was not smooth running at the outset, however....

A large number of recordings were being made but unfortunately every conceivable trouble was being experienced in the operation of the plant, and the first release was delayed some weeks. When production did start in earnest, these problems remained. Rejects were high, particularly due to extraneous bits of metal in the record biscuit. So many stampers went down from this that even sabotage was suspected. Nevertheless, Decca records were finding their way from coast to coast.

Finances were still delicate, on both sides of the Atlantic.

The situation was as critical as any we had experienced in England, and it was obvious that if the American company went down, it would drag the English company with it. Fortunately in 1934 most mail, and certainly all Decca cheques, were sent by rail. The time taken to clear cheques sent to the mid-west and the Coast gave us a little breathing space.

An advertising campaign costing \$25,000 had been commissioned to launch the new label. Debts continued to rise; at one stage there were insufficient funds for the payroll.

At the office in New York, we had a pleasant enough waiting room. There the unfortunate creditors used to wait.

There was a similar room at Decca in the 1970's. The author remembers one reported incident around 1976, when a representative of a Japanese company supplying colour TV tubes arrived at Decca House and refused to leave until he received a cheque.

To continue...

I hadn't bargained for Ruthrauff and Ryan, our advertising agents. Naturally they were annoyed that we had spent \$25,000 on our campaign and had not paid them a cent. Their treasurer spent most of the day before I was due to leave, at the Decca offices. They were going to put in the bailiff, or whatever is the American equivalent. It took all our powers of persuasion to convince them that the only way in which they could hope to have their account paid was to let me get back to England. I assured them that they only had to give me time and they would have their money. Finally they gave in.

To summarise, 1934 ended with Decca US and UK both operating, but only just! Lewis continued undaunted.

In October 1935, we made a deal with EMI under which they secured the right to press and distribute our records and those of Decca Inc. in India, Australia and certain territories in the Far East and South America. American Decca at the same time secured the rights to Parlophone and Odeon records for the USA and Canada. Louis Sterling had been for some time interested in such a deal, to which I had been opposed. The financial situation had become so acute by October that we had no alternative but to sign the contract and collect £5,000 down payment. The money, or the bulk of it, was that day cabled to America. As it turned out it proved to be an unhappy arrangement, particularly for the English company, and was a continual bone of contention. Yet once more, it was the few odd pounds that may have tipped the scales in our favour.

Fortunately, for all concerned, the financial position of both operations started to improve.

It was not long before American Decca had its first 100,000 selling record, suprisingly not made by Crosby. Two unknown artists, Riley and Farley, turned out a freak disc of their own composition - "The music goes around and around" - and it hit an astonishing sales level for those days. It was the forerunner of many and proved a powerful stimulus. The record business was climbing once more, if slowly.

As Decca's fortunes increased, the lot was not so happy for others...

During the last few years the Crystallate Company has found the going rougher and tougher. The Woolworth sixpenny record had been increased in size to nine inches, and with their Rex record at 1s. and trade declining, manufacture for sale at these prices had become unprofitable. Decca, HMV and Columbia records were retailing at 1s. 6d. and an increase in the price of Rex records would have been highly speculative. At the same time the cheap Crystallate records were absorbing a large part of the declining market for popular hits to the detriment of the industry. Early in 1937 the situation had become quite serious for Crystallate, as Woolworths were requesting ten inch records to retail at sixpence, an impossible proposition. It seemed that whilst the long term future of Crystallate as an independent record unit was hazardous, the Rex business would prove of immediate value, for the Malden factory was quite capable of handling the increased production. The Woolworth cheap record seemed in any case doomed. In March 1937, Decca entered into an agreement to purchase the Crystallate goodwill, trademarks and plant in so far as they applied to records, and freehold recording studios (at West Hampstead) for £200,000.

Arthur Haddy, their Chief Recording Engineer recalled when interviewed by the author in 1977, that the Crystallate staff were not paid for the first few months after the take-over. Crystallate/Imperial masters seem to have been destroyed shortly after the take-over, for their scrap value.

In May 1937, Decca and EMI jointly purchased the record business of British Homophone Company for £22,500. Homophone was one of the older established concerns whose business though badly hit by the slump had struggled on. During its last few years of independence it had, I believe, sold around 1,250,000 records, of which about 1,000,000 had been for one artist, Charlie Kunz. Homophone continued to manufacture commercial transcriptions for radio broadcasting.

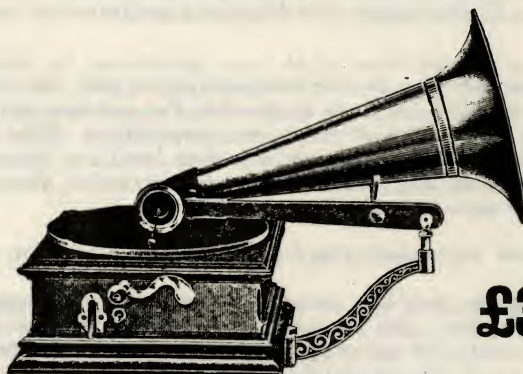


Nicole Disc Machines



The Nicole Standard

With Nickel-Plated Horn (Red Inside).



£3 3 0

LATEST DESIGN.

Price includes 200 Needles, but no Records.

NICOLE STANDARD RECORDS (7in.) 1/- CONCERT SIZE (10in.) 2/6

This machine is specially recommended. It has a CONCERT MOTOR which plays three small or two large records with one winding. Silent side wind. Large 10in. turntable. Excellent CONCERT SOUND BOX, of the latest pattern, producing a loud, full and musical tone. Handsome oak case: Measurements—Body, 12in. by 12in. by 5in.; Horn, 15½in. by 9¼in.

THE NICOLE STANDARD has been designed and built specially to our instructions and, having a Concert Motor, with 10in. turntable, this machine will prove equal to many other higher-priced models.

THE SAME MACHINE WITH 20in. BRASS HORN AND SUITABLE ARM - £4.

Latest List of Nicole Records free on application.

Between 1937 and 1939, Decca UK and US both pulled out of the red. The outbreak of war assisted the progress of the UK concern.

On Sept 3rd, 1939, it seemed that all the great efforts that had been expended in building up the Decca enterprise might yet prove to have been in vain. Everyone expected that London would be plastered with bombs from the first day of war.....It is difficult to realise it now, but most restaurants closed down in the evening during the first months of the war. Those that were open were practically deserted. Theatres and cinemas closed, and traffic crept around at night in almost total darkness. Under these conditions it was not suprising that the demand for records received a stimulus, and soon we found it impossible to keep abreast of it. It was not long before we were taking solus positions in the evening papers advertising for pressmen.

War obviously had its more damaging effect....

During a daylight raid in the summer of 1940 our New Malden record factory was showered with bombs, few of which exploded. Many of our employees were in an underground shelter and a bomb fell alongside. Fortunately it failed to explode. Damage to the factory was small, but production was crippled for some days owing to the water mains being cut.

On the last day of Dec 1940, the Selecta Gramophone building....was completely burned out (this company was an important Decca distributor). - They set up a temporary office.... both EMI and ourselves did our best to help them by shipping records direct from our factories to their dealers. I put the proposition to Harry Bryan (their Managing Director) that we should purchase the Selecta goodwill and form a new Selecta company with the same management. Selecta shares had been quoted at about 1s. on the Stock Exchange. The assets of the company were entirely liquid, composed of cash, accounts receivable, and a claim on the Government for the loss of almost the entire stock. On this basis, the shares had a value of 2s 9d to 3s. To restart the business meant finding new premises, always with a chance of a further similar disaster. It was not long before we had purchased and restarted the business. We were now an important distributor of Columbia Records and were able to control a much greater proportion of the distribution of our own records.

This seems somewhat unethical!

The end of the war found us with our personnel intact and no further serious damage to our plant. The financial position of the company showed a great improvement over that of 6 years earlier. This was largely due to the success of the record business, and to the sale of stock in American Decca, for the development of the Decca Navigator Co.

Lewis's book rarely mentions the branches of Decca, other than the Record company. Indeed, only 3 pages of the whole book are devoted to their activities.

* * * * *

Perhaps the post war years, through to the early '60s, were the Decca Record company's heydays. During this period, it operated profitably, occupying as much as 80% of the Top Twenty in the late 50's with home-grown and American product. A factory in Holton Heath in Dorset was opened, primarily for the production of 45rpm singles. The buildings also acted as a warehouse for LP sleeves.

It is difficult to isolate a turning point in Decca's fortunes. Probably, a series of separate factors resulted in an unviable independent business. Capital investment was low during the 70's. The main plant was over 40 yrs old, being converted from the 78rpm equipment. It was taking over 40 seconds to produce one disc, well in excess of the competition. The product was of a very high technical standard but could only command a price similar to that of the competitors. Little cash was expended on the popular music side of the concern, the majority spent during this period on the classical output. This was unfortunate on two major counts..

...If pop product is going to sell, it is possible to realise the investment over a short period of time. It usually takes a number of years before classical product reaches its break-even point

...It is far more likely that classical product will be played on quality Hi-Fi equipment, and that minor defects are more likely to result in a disc being returned to the dealer.

The ancient Holton Heath buildings were also a store for redundant plant. When the author once asked the reason for the large circular hole in the floor in one warehouse, he was told that it was where the Admiralty used to store the gun cotton!!

* * * * *

Added complications were evident of the American market. Because UK Decca lost the rights to the Decca trademark in the USA, all exports to USA and Canada had to be pressed with different labels - usually the London label. These were shipped to London Records Inc (Decca owned), who provided the sleeves. It appears that the UK parent did not trust London Records to make its own classical records; they pressed purely pop product.

Sales returns from Foreign manufacturers (where Decca supplied the master tapes, and the overseas concern pressed the records) were quite ludicrous on occasions. Some releases often sold fewer than 10 copies if these returns were to be believed.

Significant exports were made to Decca West Africa, from whom payments were delayed and infrequent. A local studio recorded artists such as Ebenezer Obey and his Inter-Reformers Band, and shipped tapes to New Malden for pressing. Recording at this studio was reported to be halted for a few months owing to squatters - Mr Obey and his wives.

There were a considerable number of devoted staff with the company, both on the Marketing and Manufacturing side. Most recognised the problems that the company was experiencing, and worked with great endeavour to pull the business along.

With the lack of investment, numerous re-issues were produced. These could be quite profitable because artist royalty rates were lower. (One contract, prepared in the 'flat rate' days, before 'percentage of retail price' was invented, specified the payment of 1/4 of 1 farthing per disc sold!)

Perhaps things were brought to a head in 1978. Selecta (the distribution company) decided that if Decca records were not selling too well, they had better take matters into their own hands, and get some business elsewhere. They had always undertaken a measure of distribution work for some minor labels, but during this

period, they started signing up pressing and distribution deals in earnest, with Decca actually manufacturing the records. One label produced a major hit; unfortunately Decca seemed no longer to have the production capacity and general inertia to ship this record, and was blamed in the trade press for the record failing to make the number 1 position in the charts.

The Decca group of companies was broken up during 1980. The record company was sold to Polygram (the old Polydor company, with others), who still operate the company as a separate identity. The factory at New Malden was closed (Holton Heath had already shut). The buildings themselves at New Malden were taken over by the Racal electronics company, who purchased the rest of the Decca group, excluding the Radio and Television company.

Lewis died as the take-over negotiations were being concluded with Racal; it must have been very difficult seeing the work of a lifetime being dismantled.

* * * * *

Article prepared by M J Lambert.

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LONDON MEETING

December 1982

The first part of the evening was devoted to a talk by Barry Raynaud on recording characteristics, illustrating the article he wrote for the October *HILLANDALE*. Among the records he played were an 8-inch Eclipse (rather restricted band width), Decca (Roy Fox, with some harmonic distortions), Brunswick (Guy Lomabardo, lighter on the bass), an early forties Regal Zonophone of Joe Loss (showing extended frequency response) and a Philips record of the late fifties, of Wally Stott and his Orchestra.

The second half of the evening was what is becoming our traditional Free-for-All. This year, the theme was records made outside a recording studio. This restricted the choice of acoustic records, but there was an ever widening field after 1925.

Among the records heard were: Harry Mortimer (trumpet) playing Alpine Echoes in the de Montfort Hall, Leicester; Armistice Night Speech by the Prince of Wales, 1927; Aldershot Tattoo, 1933; a Cossack marching song in the Casbeck Restaurant, London; a BBC recording for the Forces Radio Parade; A Veerbeek fair organ in the maker's workshop in Islington; and an acoustic recording, Patti's *La Calasera*, recorded at Craig-y-Nos. One of the Bells of Bournville records of about 1918 was also played.

An interesting diversion was made by the appearance of a Mickey's Record Player, a plastic toy gramophone, still in its box, with a battery-driven turntable and acoustic soundbox. The evening was suitable rounded off with Melba's 1905 recording of Auld Lang Syne with the Coldstream Guards Band.



Nicole Disc Machines



Corona No. 5.

With Brass Horn.



£8 8 0

Price includes 200 Needles, but no Records.

NICOLE STANDARD RECORDS (7in.) 1/- CONCERT SIZE (10in.) 2/6

This machine is particularly suited for concerts. Its weight ensures absolute rigidity, and the 12in. turntable and brass horn materially improve the reproduction. The motor is specially designed and built to make it absolutely reliable. It plays three small or two large records with one winding; the effects obtained with this instrument are simply marvellous.

Measurements—Body, 15½in. by 15½in. by 7½in.
Horn, 24in. by 13½in.

Latest List of Nicole Records free on application.

REGIONAL ROUNDUP

Mike Field

Most regional activities are fairly self-contained as might be expected, but it has become the custom for the more accessible regions to host the Society's annual Phonofair. One of the highlights of the event calendar, these get-togethers provide the opportunity for members to meet, do a little trading, and be generally entertained by things gramophonic and phonographic.

This year the Midlands Branch are the organisers. The venue is Oldbury, which is about 5 miles from Birmingham city centre and the date is 24 September. The building in Oldbury is particularly accessible from the M5 and its proximity to Birmingham centre may tempt the ladies. Preliminary details were discussed at the AGM on 15 January, where the existing committee was re-elected. The rest of the evening was devoted to members' choice of favourite 78s and about half a dozen enthusiasts entertained the rest with an extremely wide variety ranging from early opera to vintage jazz. At this particular meeting an unusually large number of 78s were brought along for sale, which must have provided a few impromptu "choices" over and above those brought along specially. The Midlands Group find this informal type of programme to be very successful, partly because it involves little preparation, but mainly because of the surprising and often unexpected tastes of the members.

Up in Scotland, the East Fife Branch, meeting at the Castlehill Centre, Cupar, have had two meetings in which the performance of various machines have been compared. The first, on 12 January, compared some of Chris Hamilton's Decca portables, mostly fitted with mica diaphragms, with each other and Jim Goodall's HMV 101 fitted with HMV No 2 and 4 soundboxes and a Columbia 15A (but not, before the letters roll in, simultaneously!) As might be expected, the HMV produced louder results with noticeably more bass response, and clearly the small "reflector" bowl of the Deccas could not compete with the long internal horn of the HMV. At the meeting held on 9 February it was the turn of five Columbia machines to take the stage. Comparisons of machines, and particularly soundboxes, seem to be a popular feature of East Fife meetings, no doubt due at least in some measure to Jim Goodall's interest in tuning soundboxes.

The February meeting of the Hereford Branch was held at the home of Jean and Mike Field, where the first item of the evening was an hour long video cassette film of Edison's life and achievements. Naturally the development of the phonograph is featured in the film, but as the film covers his entire life other inventions are given equal prominence. (This film on a VHS video cassette may be borrowed from Mike for showing at Branch meetings for the cost of the postage). After the film, members were encouraged to browse through Mike's collection and play cylinders of their choice on machines of their choice. In the event, 2 minute cylinders were played on a Fireside fitted with an O reproducer and 4 minutes on an Opera. During this activity refreshments were served, which illustrated the totally fair division of responsibility in the Field household. Jean provided the excellent "eats" and Mike provided the members to eat them! The "Hereford" branch consists of members from Somerset, Monmouth, Hereford and Worcester, and occasionally Manchester, and no doubt other Branches have a wide geographical membership. No one should therefore feel ineligible because they do not live near a Branch "centre" and all members are welcome to meetings on a casual or permanent basis.

In the first two issues of Regional Roundup the Chilterns Branch has not yet been mentioned, not for some dark provincial design but because of the relative frequency of their meetings. So, watch this space!

Dear Sir,

Although I am not an acoustic scientist, it seems to me that the three different lines coming from the rear of the diaphragm represent three different frequencies being considered. In the ordinary curved elbow these are reflected by the curves of the elbow in such a way that they reach the end of the tone arm out of phase with each other whereas with the plano-reflex arm the reflections are arranged in such a way that all three frequencies reach the end of the tone-arm in phase, i. e. having the same relationship with each other as they had when radiated from the diaphragm. Theoretically this should result in a cleaner quality of reproduction although I doubt if any significant difference would be detected in actual use.

W. Symons.

Dear Editor,

I am not an acoustic scientist (just a humble sound engineer), but I am prepared to say that Columbia would have been prosecuted under the Trade Descriptions Act had it then existed. Sound does not bounce about like a reflected light beam as suggested in their diagrams, but is more analogous to an expanding spherical wave (or pressure) front travelling down the arm. Like all wave motion, air particles only move with a limited displacement, back and forth according to the frequency, and not like a breeze down the tone-arm, which to give best results has a cross sectional area increasing exponentially. These simple principles were known by the scientists and designers of the day, but advertising copy men always did sell goods more by imagination, even if it did mean distorting known facts.

Barry Raynaud.

DECCA AT SCHOOL

On the opposite page we show the instructions which appear inside the lid of a school gramophone which Colin Johnson has unearthed at a local educational establishment. He writes as follows:

The underside of the turntable, around the spindle hole, is marked 'Decca'. The motor is marked 'G. G. R. 255 Marque Déposée Swiss Made', and there is a hunting horn impaled rather heraldically with a cross.

The whole layout of the top part of the machine is very HMV 103/109-ish, even to the shape of the lid and the style of the winder. In place of the usual trade mark inside the lid there's a transfer of the Invicta horse of Kent, in white, about 1 in. high. The tone-arm leads to a cast iron throat, with a horn flare made of plywood. The horn and the record compartment below each have doors with locks, and for transport there are castors on the front legs and pram-type wheels some 8 in. in diameter on the back legs. A bar handle is fitted across the back of the machine.

The G. G. R. motor is by Paillard, and K. E. C. is 'Kent Education Committee' - Ed.

K. E. C. S T O R E S

INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE USE AND CARE OF THE MOTOR OF THE "K. E. C." GRAMOPHONE.

When the instruments are supplied, the motors are properly oiled and greased, but all BEARINGS will require OILING every four to six months - according to the amount of use to which the gramophones are put.

A very light oil, such as that used for lubricating sewing machines, is recommended for this purpose.

The GEARS will require GREASING occasionally, for which vaseline, slightly thinned with the oil, should be used.

To remove the motor for oiling and greasing .-

- (1) Lift turntable off spindle - the turntable may be found to fit tightly but it is not fastened in any way.
- (2) Remove winding handle.
- (3) Take out the four screws which pass through the larger of the two sections of the top board, i.e. the section through which the turntable spindle protrudes. This board, to which the motor is secured, can then easily be lifted out.

I M P O R T A N T.

THE WINDING OPERATION SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT GENTLY.

THE MOTOR SHOULD BE RUNNING WHILST THE SPRING IS BEING WOUND.

TO PREVENT DAMAGE BY OVERWINDING THE MOTOR SHOULD NOT BE WOUND RIGHT UP.

THE FIRST PERSON TO RECORD?

Dear Christopher,

I followed with interest the debate in the last two issues of *Hillandale* concerning the oldest person to record. In view of the observations made, I wonder if I might advance the discussion a little further.

Colin Johnson suggests that Cardinal Manning could well hold the record (pardon the pun) but as to his exact date of birth Colin remains uncertain. I took the opportunity to visit an ecclesiastical library and consulted the numerous biographies of this unlikely prince of the Church. I discovered that 15th July 1808 was his date of birth. He died, incidentally, on 14th January 1892, and his funeral, contemporary writers describe as rivalling even Wellington's.

While 15th July 1808 beats Tennyson (August 1809) and Gladstone (December 1809) I have in fact a more substantial claimant to the title *The Oldest Person to Record*. Again we are looking at a former Anglican cleric, and prince of the Roman Church John Henry Newman, born February 21st 1801: died August 1890. I have seen the photograph, taken on the first anniversary of Newman's death, of his friends gathered round a marble bust of him, while in their midst a phonograph plays the cylinder Newman made a year or two earlier. I must confess that I have never heard this cylinder, nor do I know if it survives, but I do think that this additional information places Newman's cardinal's hat well and truly at the centre of the ring.

Peter Martland.

Dear Christopher,

Further to the articles on the oldest person to record, I have in my possession a photostat page from a magazine dated November 1900, part of which I quote:

"... We have received from Mr. J.S. Wayland, dealer in Edison Bell phonographs, 28, Grand Parade, Cork, an excellent and most interesting photograph of Peggy o'Leary, a lady living at Crosshaven, Co. Cork and who has attained the extreme age of 112 years. This marvellous old lady is still in the enjoyment of good health, and is described as a most jolly old woman. She is passionately fond of music and dancing, though we presume she can only enjoy the latter as a spectator. Recently she sang into the phonograph the old Irish melody 'Paudheen o'Rafferty' and a really excellent record was obtained. Quite pleased at the novelty she laughed heartily at the idea, and was quite entranced at the result of her efforts. We certainly think she is the oldest person who has ever sung into a phonograph and of whom a record exists, a decidedly unique thing of its kind....."

If Peggy o'Leary was indeed 112 years old then she would have been born in 1788, or 1787 if her birthday fell in the latter months of the year.

Brunswick was one of the major labels in the UK during the 1930's and 1940's. Although owned by various US and UK companies (see Frank Andrews' article in Hillandale News, Issue 122), Brunswick records were manufactured exclusively by Decca during this period.

But where is the label now? Few major labels such as this actually vanish altogether (witness the case of Regal Zonophone, used by EMI during the late 1960's for pop product, and resurrected yet again in 1980 for a punk rock single).

Well, it appears that the label fell into disuse in the UK during the mid-1960's. The highest catalogue number I can find is 05975 which was released in 1967. At this time, the US Brunswick Record Corporation was being purchased by the manager of one of the artists then contracted to the label. Rumour has it that the purchaser thought the sale included the back catalogue, and that he was somewhat disappointed to learn that he had only bought the Brunswick logo.

A distinct change was brought about by the new management; the company now specialised in disco music!!

Decca UK undertook the pressing and distribution for the new management in 1973 (material appearing on MCA in the meantime). Catalogue numbers started at BR 1, and ran through to 1976 with around 50 issues. The familiar Brunswick shield appeared on these 45rpm discs, identical to that on the 78rpm discs several decades earlier. Sales were good; the licencing deal gave Decca UK a fair proportion of its popular hit product during the life of the deal.

Disaster hit in 1977, when a disagreement between the BRC management and the Federal tax authorities resulted in extended and enforced holidays.

In 1980, however, recording activities were restarted, but the product now appears in the UK on the Calibre and Excaliber labels, rather than the Brunswick logo. I guess that Decca was in no position to take them back into their fold, as they themselves were in the process of being absorbed by Phonogram at this time.

So, Brunswick still lives, but in a shadow of its former glory, and in a radically different form to that of its earlier years.

GLOBE-WERNICKE

Colin Johnson writes that he has acquired about two dozen record folders for use in Globe-Wernicke (pronounced 'Vernikker') record cabinets. Any owner of one of these imposing pieces of furniture is welcome to these sleeves, and should write to Colin at [REDACTED] Sheerness, Kent.

Penny-in-Slot Zonophones.



Standard Penny-in-Slot Zonophone. £6 12s. 6d.

With STANDARD MOTOR, 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. nickel-plated horn, CONCERT SOUND BOX and 200 needles.
 Measurement—Body, 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ by 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. Horn, 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Concert Penny-in-Slot Zonophone. £9 17s. 6d.

With CONCERT MOTOR, 29in. polished brass horn, CONCERT SOUND BOX and 200 needles.
 Measurements—Body, 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 10in. Horn, 29in. by 13in.

These machines have lately been completely altered. The slot mechanism works with absolute precision, and stops the machine after a certain number of revolutions, making it impossible for the user to play more than one record without placing another penny in the slot.

Strongly made oak cases, and money-draw with safety lock.

Latest List of Nicole Records free on application.

I must thank Joe Pengelly for his interesting little note on the Cosens article the month before, and it does seem a pity that our Editor seems to be steeped in an early form of empirical technology - complete with cloth ears! Shame! (If you mean I like old fashioned things better than modern ones, and that my ears can do the work of a whole bank of electronic filters, then you are quite right, and I am most certainly not ashamed of it - Ed.)

What matters to me is not what the user's tastes are - by all means let him play his records with tin tacks if he so wishes - but the ridiculous claims he makes, usually without having access to any kind of test equipment or even to a good microscope. Also rather intriguing is the way some writers come to a particular conclusion.

Barry Reynaud may well be correct in his assumption that frequency modulation is the chief cause of the characteristic sound of old recordings. Although I did not see his demonstration, I think there are a number of other factors involved. But what has all this to do with "Trying out a boxful of old microphones of various types in order to select some talkback mics. for a studio"? (I quote from memory.)

A studio talkback mic. is usually supplied and installed along with the mixer - and anyway, how many studios were in the building? Only one talkback microphone per studio is necessary. (This microphone the recording engineer uses to talk to the artistes in the studio from the control room - he can hear what they are saying through the recording mics. and his monitor speaker). Also, a ring modulator causes a square wave pocket to a sine wave (sic), and this is not the same as ordinary frequency modulation.

Sound, by the way, dear readers, does not bounce about in quite the same way as light does from a series of mirrors. Sound is a change of pressure in (for the most part) the air - and air is elastic. A diaphragm then, coupled to a tone-arm (although a very complex matter to study in depth) will not be very different by having flats on the corners. What is of great importance is that the whole system (soundbox, tone-arm and horn) should be coupled together properly (matched mechanical impedances) and the whole follow one of the well-known laws - such as a 16-foot straight exponential horn will give. The horn, incidentally, need not be circular in section, and can follow quite a few bends, doubling back on itself like a re-entrant horn. The only fault with this form is that the high frequencies can't get through as they tend to be lost.

Once the complicated business of a high frequency can be grasped, one may come to understand that, inscribed on 'the wax' it will have a wavelength, and this will depend on the velocity of the recording medium. This latter, while being constant with cylinders, is not so with discs. Let us take an example, using the 14 KCS frequency quoted by Cosens:

Let our calculation be expressed in decimals as they are much easier to use with a normal calculator, and there are 25.4mm. to the inch:

A 12" record will be 304.8mm. o.d., the outer groove being somewhere around 290 mm.

$290 \times \pi$ (3.1415926) is equal to 911.06185×78 (r.p.m.) = 71062.824. Divide this by 60: =1184.3804. This latter is the linear speed at that point, in revs. per second. Dividing this by the frequency (14,000 cycles per second) will give the wavelength, which is 0.0845986. To convert back to fractions of an inch, divide by 25.4. Our answer will then be 0.0033306, or just over three thousandths of an inch. Some fibre needle!

Of course the inner groove at around 4.72 inches diameter will give a wavelength (at the same frequency) of 0.013782 – about four times as long due to the lower velocity. I can't imagine even at that length that a fibre needle will negotiate it properly.

I could go on for yards more, but I am sure I would bore the pants off you all. Let me, however, close with two remarks:

1) I haven't mentioned anything electrical, this being a new invention of a mere ninety years or so, as far as mains supply is concerned.

2) It seems a wonder that the horrible parrot-in-a-box squawking can be compensated for by human psychology when listening to mechanical reproducers, people actually preferring this noise to the greatly improved results obtainable from a properly compensated 'electrical' reproducer. Would they like to go back to spark telegraphy or sit and watch the old Baird 30-line television system? I believe they would – and compensate for that! Ah well – by the time we come to the twenty-first century there won't be many playable recordings left.

Three cheers for old Pengelly – he appears to be one of the few scientific thinkers among us. I wonder what they think of us abroad?

Bye everyone.....

Denis Harbaur.

P.S. In articles about old companies, could we have some more details of where the recording studios were and who performed in them – even what systems were in use? Like the horrible old men who go to see the place of a murder, I found myself, as I live nearby, looking for the girls' school in Norland Square. I found a block of flats! But these details can make an article much more interesting to some of us, rather than information on shareholders and managing directors. Where for instance was the old Parlophone studio? Does anyone know?

D.H.

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THE FIRST LIST CONTAINS, Suitably Paired :—Miner's Dream, Operatic Selections, King Edward's Horse Band and Royal Guards from Mikado, William Tell, Girl in Train, 3rd Act Lohengrin, and other selections, Marches, &c., Operatic Vocals, Watchman What of the Night, Miserere, Angelus, Light as Air, Let me Gaze, &c., Concertina, Lost Chord, Austria, Blue Bells of Scotland (with Bell effects), and special finale Estudiantina. Belphegor (with Bagpipe finale).—24 DOUBLE RECORDS, 48 SELECTIONS.

SEND FOR CATALOGUE OR SAMPLE RECORD.

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Are the Finest Tone and Best gramophone Records yet issued irrespective of price. New records include :—Potted Pantomime, Minstrels, Back to Dixie, Massa's in Cold Cold Ground, Descriptive, Uncle Pete's Return, The Last Muster, Wardle's Party, Nellie Dean, Chocolate Soldier, Pearl Feather, and others ready Nov. 15th. Supplementary Lists in preparation.

PERSISTENT MISREPRESENTATION cannot kill true merit. We are constantly receiving unsolicited testimonials, here are a few more. There is a lot of baloon talk but you know "the proof of the pudding is —" Here are **GENUINE** opinions :—

Glossop, October 24.

I see one correspondent in S.W. praising your Record, No. 180—I have 30 of yours including 180—I think your 67 is the finest I have without a doubt for voice, and No. 111 for violins. I have played it as the old saying is, "threadbare," but it sounds just the same as ever. I also have 50 of other makes (giving seven names).

Chorlton, October 24.

Owing to favourable review in S.W., I applied to my dealer for your Record, 213, "El Miserere." He did not report favourably. A day or two afterwards I purchased one in Manchester. Agreeably surprised does not express my feelings. I was charmed and the charm conjured the 2/6 out of my pocket. This evening I walked 2 miles to the dealer's shop; he was surprised, described it as "beautiful" and produced an El Miserere he had in stock, price

12/6. The record was not half as smooth and sweet, and he confessed that of the two he preferred yours.

(This letter is much abbreviated, adjectives of praise more fully abound, but it finishes with address of the dealer and request to send him catalogues).

Notting Hill, October 5.

I have nearly 100 of your Discaphone Records, and am writing to tell you how much I appreciate them. In my opinion they are finer tone and clearer (especially bands) than any other make. I am very fond of good music, and such records as (here follows a list of Operatic Selections, Marches, etc., from our list) I consider the finest I have heard. I am anxious to get more similar pieces, and if you contemplate recording these I prefer to wait a month or two for them. I beg to append a list, which I suggest would be good sellers.—

N.B.—We are always glad to have suggested titles from our friends.

J. E. HOUGH, Ltd., Edison Bell Works, Glengall Road, London, S.E.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE EDISON DISC PHONOGRAPHS AND THE DIAMOND DISCS

A History with Illustrations, by George L. Frow.

Published by George L. Frow: Price £11.20 (£11.50 overseas; U.S.A. \$22.00 seamail, \$29.00 airmail).

Over ten years ago, on a visit to Ipswich in my ancient Daimler, I called at the late Jim Dennis' shop and there found a copy of George Frow's original, paper-bound Guide to the Edison Cylinder Phonograph. I was not even a member of the C.L.P.G.S. then, and this, the first monograph to appear on any aspect of talking machines, was something of an eye-opener to me. It showed me that I was not alone in being fascinated by the small and often totally insignificant variations that appear on different models of a manufactured product during its currency, particularly when that product has long been obsolete in all its forms.

For the serious collector, such monographs are invaluable, particularly if they are set out with the clarity and ease-of-reference of George Frow's works, and it seems a shame that there should so far have been so few to follow the lead he established all those years ago. Hitherto, the most notable of these has been the second, greatly enlarged edition of the Edison Cylinder machine book, written in collaboration with Al Seftl, but now George Frow has excelled himself by producing an even fatter volume on a subject which at first sight might seem to offer rather less scope than the cylinder phonographs.

Certainly, there are far fewer Edison disc machines around, at least on the eastern side of the Atlantic, and those that do appear differ mainly in size and cabinet design rather than technical construction. The early, belt-driven motors are almost unknown over here, and most examples seen date from the 1920s and are confined to about four or five cabinet designs. Flicking through the pages of this new book very quickly, I counted between forty and fifty different Diamond Disc models, which just goes to show what variety there is, and how it is possible to fill over 280 pages with information on this very specialised subject.

Those familiar with the earlier work will find a similar exposition of the various models, from the earliest to the latest and including the lateral-cut machines, both radio-phonographs and portables. In addition, there is an introductory history of the Edison disc machines, starting with the disc tinfoil phonograph. The records themselves are also well covered, as are such ancillary subjects such as automatic brakes, horn sizes and finishes, motors and reproducers. There is a well illustrated chapter on disc manufacture, and there is no doubt that the author, perhaps mindful of the limited number of potential readers of a simple catalogue of Edison disc machines, has produced a volume which will interest everyone who collects machines or records or their history by providing an insight into the life of a major company behind the scenes.

R. Miller and R. Boar:

THE INCREDIBLE TALKING MACHINE

Quartet/Visual Arts Books, 287pp. Available from C.L.P.G.S. Bookshelf, £16 20 post paid.

A history of EMI and its constituent companies has long been awaited, and it was always hoped that this would come from Leonard Petts, but here he is given credit for historical research. It is an elegant book with a striking dust jacket depicting most of EMI's best-known artists over much of its lifetime, and is repeated in monochrome as the end papers. It is large, 10½ in. x 9½ in. (about the area of a 10-inch record cover), and over one inch thick, and relates the story of the talking machine from Edison in 1877 to the present-day pop and rock scene, in some 17 chapters. There are generous illustrations, both in colour and sepia/black, and only a few have been published before; their quality is first class, many being frayed and cracked documents and are really fascinating. Others like Caruso as Rhadames or Dietrich as Lola are perhaps too familiar for a book of this type.

The chapters on the early days in London, and the Gaisbergs' trips abroad include much new material, and appear to have been laid out by Leonard Petts, as we well know his research on these matters. There are tales of the red label artists, the great singers who lacked both breeding and manners and often behaved boorishly at recordings sessions or failed to appear after a large orchestra had been assembled at their request, and this was not confined to the old-timers, a practice that must have been very frustrating to those trying to run a profitable company. Very much more of the problems involved in getting the first Caruso records are recounted, including a duel that nearly resulted, and the tact and bribery needed to get royal or presidential records are recalled, and here we learn that King Edward VII did not like the gramophone. We are told that Sir Ernest Fisk, managing director of the Company, ignored the recording side of the business so much in the later forties that things ran downhill fast until, seeing 'no future for the long-playing record', he was dismissed in 1951. Gradually the book comes round to the popular types of record in its final chapters, and to rock and roll and its degenerate successors and exponents, for whom to many of us no ocean exists too deep to swallow them. However they kept the industry tottering on its feet when the classical and romantic repertoire would not have sustained it.

At this point the reviewer must turn critic and point to some of the weeds in other men's pastures. This is a handsome and desirable book, but it is a coffee table rather than a student's book. For one thing there are no footnotes, no index and only some of the pages are numbered - a quite extraordinary oddity. It seems to suffer from being written by a committee: no fewer than nine people are credited with its conception, design, writing, research, captions and illustrations, and a resulting unevenness shows in the narrative. The first chapter is not at all satisfactory, and this should have been avoided by consulting the many articles and papers available on Edison's invention and Colonel Gouraud's exploitation of the phonograph from his home in Norwood (not Sydenham) in London. There are a number of other errors, transposed captions, incorrect dates - King Edward VIII reigned only in 1936, not 1938 and

'Keep the Home Fires Burning' dates from 1915, not 1917 - to mention but two, and other minor errors cast a suspicious shadow on some of the other information. One must also ask what on earth George Bernard Shaw had to do with The Gramophone Company. He made no records that one can recollect, except for Linguaphone, but is one of the two or three highlighted figures on the cover alongside Caruso, Elgar and a Beatle. Apart from Leonard Petts, who would have given a more elegant style to this book, the other writers appear to be journalists in general practice. A full account of the Gramophone Company and allied companies has been long awaited, and this is not to the standard we expected. At the same time it is a very readable book for those who know nothing of Gelatt or Read and Welch or Jerrold Northrop Moore, and should enjoy a good sale particularly on the high quality of its illustrations, and the interest of so much of its content.

G. L. F.

RADIO BROADCASTS IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS 1924 - 1941

Compiled by James R. Smart.

Available at \$10 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 (Stock No. 030-000-00124 9).

Franklin Roosevelt, Rudyard Kipling, John Masefield, Adolf Hitler, Rudy Vallee, William Joyce, Jack Benny, Winston Churchill: What have all these in common? Well, they are all included in this catalogue of recordings of radio broadcasts in the Library of Congress, along with the Chesterfield Program, Palmolive Beauty Box Theatre, Amateur Hour and Music Appreciation Hour. The catalogue covers a period when recording of programmes was much less easy and hence much less widespread than it is today. As the press release sent with the review copy points out, these recordings were originally made on 16-inch aluminium discs, each side of which could hold no more than 15 minutes of a broadcast.

The catalogue is arranged chronologically, with an index, and provides a fascinating series of juxtapositions of improbable bedfellows, but its real value to the historian is perhaps too specialised for it to appeal to the average reader. Inevitably, too, much of the material is of American interest, although there is a fair sprinkling of European names, some of them recorded from BBC short wave transmissions. Since it appears that copies of the recordings are not normally available, the pleasure of finding an interesting looking recording and then seeking it out must be confined to those able to visit the Library of Congress, but this volume nonetheless provides a very useful reference work to those interested in the famous, whether in the field of recording or anything else, or of course to those interested in the history of radio broadcasting.

C. P.

Dear Mr. Proudfoot,

I recently acquired a record with a feature which would be a boon to those dubbing early vocal 78s on to l.p. who are faced with the problem of proper speed and pitch.

The disc is a Gramophone CONcert Record, GC-37851, of 1909 vintage, but its matrix number, 44750, shows that the recording was made in Paris in about 1904. The selection is Ave Maria, played on 'cello and piano. After the music is finished, there is a small gap, and then a final narrow band playing a single note, which my tuning fork suggests should be New Philharmonic A. If one 'tunes' the record to standard A, the playing speed comes out at a shade under 78 rpm (assuming my GL75 turntable is playing at 78 rpm when set at that speed). I conclude that the extra band was added to allow the fastidious to tune their gramophones, and play the records at the right pitch.

Some singers were very particular - and rightly so - about pitch and playing speeds. A tuning band would have put the onus on the gramophone user, and this would have been fine as long as he or she had a tuning fork or a piano in tune! I have come across a reference to another disc apparently with a tuning band, and this time by a singer. The record is partly described on Page 393 of Hillandale No. 86. It is a red G and T, 053048, recorded in Milan in 1904 by the soprano Nini Frascani - indeed, it is her first record and is of a song by Giordani with the composer at the piano. Frascani was a somewhat more celebrated singer than Ciaparelli, and was particularly prominent on the Italian opera scene. Many of her records appear in the 1914 Columbia UK catalogue of operatic recordings, and she also made records for Fonotopia.

LONDON MEETING

January 1983

Members and guests were entertained by an evening of Pathé centre-start records presented by Len Watts. Len has never known life without Pathés, and still has many records which have survived from his early childhood.

The first half was devoted to ballet music and novelty dances. At one time, patrons of opera demanded a ballet to be included, and many of these came to exist as separate suites. Apart from an item from Faust, most of the material selected was hardly known in this country. Excerpts were heard from Herodiade, Henry VIII (Saint-Saens), Korrigane (Widor), Hamlet and the Masquerade ballet (Paul Lacôme). Novelty dances included the Big Boot (Auguste Bosc), Children's Dance (Eric Coates), La Kraquette (Justin Clérice) and the Hobble-Skirt Walk: These were all orchestral items.

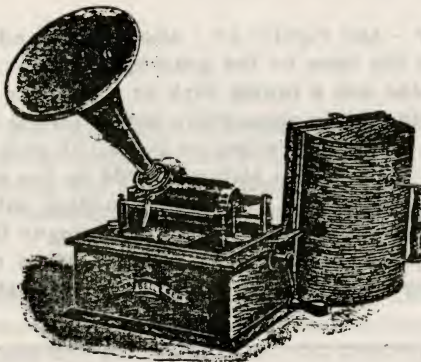
The second half was filled by comedy, mostly by well-known artists, such as Little Tich, Bransby Williams, Charles Penrose, Russell Hunting, Harry Fragson, Ernest Shand and Harry Fay. For the musical hall enthusiast, this second half provided a veritable feast.

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APPLICATIONS AND REMITTANCES TO

J. E. HOUGH, Ltd., Edisonia Works, Glengall Rd., London, S.E.

(January 1910)

198

Since the last edition of *Hillandale*, the deaths have occurred of three musicians who must be familiar to every member of this society. Two were unquestionably on the classical side of music, the third equally unquestionably from the 'pop' field, but with occasional forays into the classics.

The death occurred late in February of Sir Adrian Boult. He was 93 and was quite fairly described as the last of the great nineteenth century conductors, having learned his art from the legendary Artur Nikisch in Leipzig before the first world war. On his return to London he joined the Royal Opera. In 1916, while in the army he was given permission to conduct the Liverpool Philharmonic and two years later he was conducting the London Symphony Orchestra. As John Cavanagh mentions elsewhere in this issue, Boult's first recording was made in 1920. He transferred his allegiance from HMV to Edison Bell in 1922, but returned to HMV when he was appointed musical director of the BBC in 1930. For the next fifty years Sir Adrian Boult was regarded as one of Britain's leading musical figures and by the time of his retirement at the age of 92 in December 1981 he had become a legend in his own lifetime.

The second giant of the classical world to have died recently was Sir William Walton. Coincidentally one of his most popular compositions, 'Crown Imperial', which was written for the 1937 Coronation, was recorded by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, with Berkley Mason at the organ, and the conductor... none other than Sir Adrian Boult (HMV DB 3164). But Walton was also a respected conductor and among his recordings likely to be found are the five-record set of 'Belshazzar's Feast' and various recordings of 'Facade'.

Finally, the death was reported in Sydney, Australia, of the pianist Winifred Atwell. I was a youngster in the early 1950s and one of my treasured 78s was the 'Black and White Rag', released by Decca about 1950. It came as something of a shock to discover that Miss Atwell was 69 and had lived in Australia for the past 25 years. It would appear that her recording career, which almost exactly filled the 1950s, resulted in around twenty records in the hit parade, including of course the Black and White Rag (still used today as the signature tune of the BBC Television series 'Pot Black'), 'Let's Have a Party', 'Let's Have a Ding-Dong' and 'Poor People of Paris'. The last two titles were Miss Atwell's two recordings which made it to the top of the hit parade. Surprisingly though, for a pianist who might be dismissed as just another 'pop' artiste, Winifred Atwell also had a moderate success with a 1954 recording of Rachmaninoff's eighteenth Variation on a Theme by Paganini.

Colin Johnson.

HELP WANTED

Mr. J. Allen, of [REDACTED] has a Zephyrphone of circa 1912 which has lost its original motor and composition tone-arm. Apparently, these machines were sold by Crass and Son of Banbury and St. Aldate's, Oxford, but information on the correct motor is lacking, and anyone who may be able to help Mr. Allen with information or, better still, a spare tone-arm or motor, is asked to write to him at the above address.

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Articles for the Hillandale News should be sent to the EDITOR at the above address. Inclusion is at the Editor's discretion. Items intended for a specific issue must reach the Editor not less than one month before the first day of the month of publication. All articles should carry the author's name (accompanying letters may be separated before the magazine is typed). Illustrations should be in the form of line drawings on plain paper, engravings or good quality photostats, or black and white photographs (not negatives or colour prints or transparencies). Material which is to be returned should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope of suitable size.

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